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ontario educational television

primary social studies: understanding our local community

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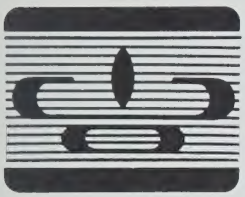
Understanding Our Local Community

A SERIES OF SIX PROGRAMS DESIGNED
FOR PRIMARY DIVISION SOCIAL STUDIES



Ontario Educational Television
Ontario Department of Education

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Suggestions for Viewing Television in the Classroom

THE TELEVISION SET

1. Switch on the television set at least five minutes before the start of the program. Turn the volume control down and cover the picture by adjusting the doors of the set, or cover with drapery or other material. This will ensure a minimum of class interruption during the warm-up procedure.
2. Two minutes prior to telecast, make the necessary adjustments to the brightness and contrast controls to ensure picture clarity. Keep volume turned down.
3. Approximately twenty seconds prior to telecast time remove the screen cover and adjust the volume control. Try to avoid adjustments during the program telecast.
4. Window and other lighting reflections on the screen may occur if the television set is positioned at certain angles to light sources. This condition can be avoided by repositioning the television set or through the use of the cabinet doors. If no doors, cardboard shields may be easily fashioned and fixed to the set.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

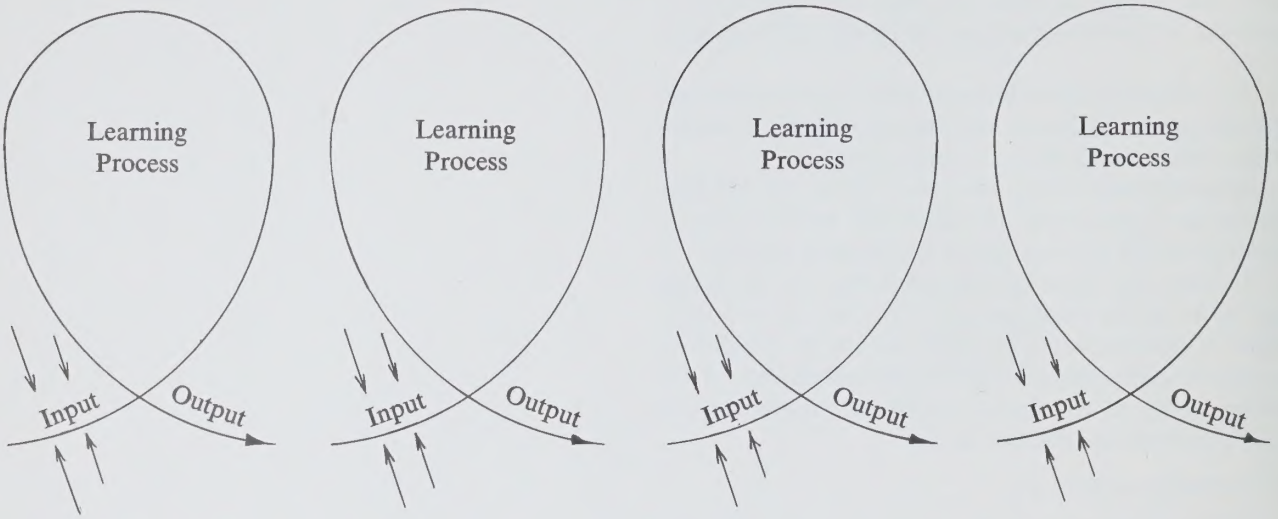
5. It is not necessary to black out the classroom. If lighting can be slightly dimmed by closing window drapery or switching off some lights, acceptable light level should result.
6. Tests should be made prior to the broadcast, to ensure that the maximum benefits of viewing and listening are available to each pupil. The seating arrangements will obviously vary with room shapes, type of furniture and number of pupils, but no pupil should be placed in a position that is greater than a 45° angle from a line drawn straight from the centre of the picture tube. Using a 23-inch screen, the minimum distance between pupil and picture should be approximately five feet, and maximum distance from picture should be approximately twenty feet. The television receiver should be raised to a height so that the centre of the picture tube is approximately 66 inches above floor level.
7. These approximate measurements indicate that a square or wide classroom shape is much better than a long narrow room unless of course, desks can be turned towards a long wall or aligned towards a corner.

Caution: The measurements shown above are approximate. They may not apply to all classrooms and are offered as a guide only. Long extension cords, antenna leads, and insecure structures for the elevation of the television set should be avoided. Pupils should be discouraged from assisting in setting up the television set or making any adjustments to it.

Primary Social Studies: Understanding Our Local Community

INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

BEHIND THE SCENES



In this series of programs we are interested in having children arrive at an integrated, correlated *output* from an *input* of initially random, unorganized facts and experiences as a result of a learning process.

To help children organize or use their random information in a learning process, it is necessary for us to do considerable pre-planning. This includes such tasks as:

SELECTING A TOPIC FOR THE UNIT

The course outlines provide flexible guidelines. It is however, important to consider the following:
– age, maturity and interests of children;
– previous educational experiences;
– availability of resources and materials.

GATHERING AND IDENTIFYING RESOURCES

During this stage you will be expanding your own background of knowledge in the content of the topic. You will also identify material of varying levels of difficulty for the children to use, or get leads for them to follow in obtaining information.
Here are some areas to explore:
– people: older citizens in the community
people who have travelled
experts in specific fields
– places of interest
– realia: objects, models, etc.
– films, filmstrips, pictures, maps
– documents, papers, magazines, etc.
– reference books, encyclopedias, atlases, almanacs
– textbooks

OBJECTIVES AND EVALUATION

Evaluation can be done effectively only if objectives or goals for learning are established in the beginning. Because evaluation is as continuous as education itself, some of the objectives may be modified from day to day. If we accept the fact that Social Studies is one vehicle for developing desirable attitudes and skills, as well as understandings, it is important to establish objectives and to evaluate progress in each of these three areas.

Many guidebooks include lists of general objectives. These are rooted in the basic philosophy of education. In order to be useful teaching tools they must be made specific.

Specific objectives must be stated in terms of observable behaviour if they are to give direction to the evaluation of progress.

The following sample of general and specific objectives in the areas of attitudes and skills will illustrate the difference.

1. ATTITUDES

a) General Objectives
– to develop respect for oneself
– to develop respect for others.
– to cooperate with others

b) Specific Objectives (in terms of observable behaviour)

BEHAVIOUR REFLECTING ATTITUDES

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Is sensitive to needs and problems of others				
Helps others meet needs and solve problems				
Accepts suggestions				
Makes constructive suggestions				
Respects the property of others				
Follows group plans and decisions				
Shares his ideas and materials willingly				
Works courteously and happily with others				
Gives encouragement to others				
Enjoys group work				
Thanks others for help				
Express appreciation for contribution of others				

By adding a rating scale as illustrated above, it is possible to keep a record of each child's performance. A check-mark placed on the scale periodically soon provides a pattern of behaviour. Such a record, though subjective, is better than relying on sporadic memory. It provides a basis for chatting with the pupil and for parent-teacher conferences.

c) Pupil self-rating chart

The following chart is expressed in language used by children when developing standards. It identifies behaviour which reflects desirable attitudes and work-study habits. Each child might well elect to work on only a few such items at a time – ones with which he feels he is experiencing considerable difficulty. By adding a rating scale each child is encouraged to examine his own performance systematically. Such evaluation is personal for the child and he and the teacher should compare notes occasionally to check progress.

WORKING WELL WITH OTHERS

How often do you do each item listed below?	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	?
1. I stick to the job until it is finished.					
2. I take part in many different activities.					
3. I work with everyone in the class.					
4. I am eager to try out new ideas and to work on new problems.					
5. I share materials with others.					
6. I help set up plans and directions and follow them.					
7. I work happily without grumbling or losing my temper.					
8. I give in if my ideas conflict with the best interests of the group.					
9. I consider the rights of others.					
10. I am courteous and use good manners.					

John U. Michaelis, *Social Studies for Children in a Democracy*
Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964

2. SKILLS

a) General Objectives
– identifying problems
– selecting source materials
– collecting data
– organizing findings
– communicating with others
– evaluating learning

b) Specific Objectives
– locates sources of information
– uses the table of contents and index
– uses encyclopedias effectively
– takes notes related to topics under study
– uses point notes and outline forms
– organizes information from several sources
– arranges ideas in good order
– participates in discussion
– presents oral reports clearly
– is able to distinguish facts from opinions
– detects discrepancies

By adding a rating scale to a list of specific objectives, it is possible to record pupil performance in these areas as it is observed. There are a number of commercially prepared tests in this area which might be used with discretion. Self-rating by pupils in the area of work-study skills and group-process skills is also useful if the pupils set up the goals or objectives on the list.

3. UNDERSTANDINGS

In the area of understandings it is also necessary to develop a list of the ideas or facts which you believe are important for children to learn about the topic being studied.

a) General Understandings
– all communities need services
– many people work to provide a variety of community services
– how different services are paid for

b) Specific Understandings
– what services are available in our community?
– where are these services located?
– how many people are employed in a given service?

In the process of gathering and sharing information, children will use a great deal of material which is colourful and adds interest to the experience but which will not necessarily be useful as permanent knowledge. There is little value in including such material in evaluation instruments. Preparing such evaluation instruments which are valid and reliable requires careful planning.

Overview of the Series

This is a series of six social studies programs on the theme *Understanding our Local Community*. Throughout the series, Mrs. Patricia Helliwell, the teacher, will be working with a group of Grade 3 children. The class consists of approximately 24 children with the usual range in age and ability. Most of the children have spent their first three years in classes where pupil inquiry and pupil initiative in learning have been encouraged. They have had many opportunities to gather information from direct experiences such as field trips, talking to people, and having people visit their classrooms.

Although these programs show a Grade 3 class at work, primary children across the province are encouraged to watch them too. Some aspects of the series could be useful to each of the primary grades. The topic chosen merely provides a vehicle to portray a way of working which can be modified to accommodate different levels of maturity, and ability.

All six programs should be seen by the children because of the continuity inherent in the series. The following outline of the programs may explain this point.

Program 1: Launching the study:
Arousing pupil curiosity
Stimulating questions to be explored
Program 2: Planning together:
Listing questions
Organizing for study
Program 3: Gathering information:
On a walking trip
A visit to the City Hall
Program 4: Gathering information (contd.):
On a bus trip
A visit to a firehall
Program 5: Sharing information:
Group reports to the class
Program 6: Evaluating the experience:
What did we do well?
What information did we get?
How could we improve?

In order to retain maximum spontaneity on the part of the children in the midst of necessarily distracting circumstances, and to share with you the kinds of problems which arise when children work in this way, these programs are practically unrehearsed and unedited. Many of the questions and problems which arose could have been dealt with in a variety of ways. You might find it useful to discuss such alternatives with other teachers on the staff who are also watching the series.

BASIC PURPOSES UNDERLYING THIS SERIES

There are two important ideas underlying this series of programs. If these are understood, it may help you to help the children get the greatest benefit out of watching.

FIRST, children will be better able to cope with the constantly growing body of knowledge by being given help in developing competence in the skills of inquiry, learning how to learn – rather than by being given heavier textbooks to memorize.

SECONDLY, children are likely to develop new self-concepts. As they watch and listen, they see teacher-pupil planning and children working in groups. They hear children asking useful questions, deciding on ways of finding information, ways of sharing information with each other, and ways of evaluating their own products, performance and learning. By watching other children work in this way, they come to believe they can do these things too – perhaps in the same way, perhaps in ways they discover for themselves. The skills they must develop as they work in this way will help them cope with the increased amount of information they will meet in a changing world.

BEFORE THE SERIES BEGINS

Before the series begins, the children should know that for the next six weeks they will be watching the same class of children working on the topic *Understanding our Local Community*. They should know that for these children "our community" is the city of Toronto. They should locate it and learn that it is the capital city of our province. It is important for children in rural and semi-rural areas to learn what life in a big city is like, just as children in large cities and suburban areas need opportunities to learn about rural life. Mobility of population and the need to develop sympathetic understanding and appreciation for all people make this interchange important.

PURPOSES FOR WATCHING THE SERIES

After the children have an explanation of what the series is about and how the children in the television class will work, the watching will be more purposeful if you can help your class develop a few reasons for watching. These should grow out of your discussion with the children and will be different in each classroom.

Here is a sample list of some purposes they might develop:

- to learn what another community – a big-city community – is like.
- to hear what kinds of questions the children will ask about their community.
- to watch the different ways the class uses to find out about its community (i.e. trips, interviews, etc.).
- to hear children share the information they gathered in class reports and discussions.
- to study their own community along with the television class, using some of the methods they see used on TV, adding their own ideas.

BEFORE EACH PROGRAM

By placing on a chart or on a side chalkboard the purposes which the children listed for watching the programs, it will be easy to refer to them quickly before each program. Because you will know the general content of the program they are about to see, you can help them select the purpose or purposes most likely to be achieved on that particular program. For each program, the guide will list a question or two which may suggest additional reasons for watching.

AFTER EACH PROGRAM

Talk about each program after it is over. This is one kind of evaluation. It is also an opportunity for children to demonstrate the quality of their thinking. Such information helps you to learn where your children need help in skills required for critical thinking. Do their questions or comments indicate that they notice discrepancies or inadequacies? Can they distinguish facts from opinions? etc. Here is a sample of some aspects of the programs children might be encouraged to discuss:

- things we enjoyed about watching the class at work
- things the children did very well
- things we could do in studying our community
- ideas we got about ways of getting information, or making records, or reporting to a class
- how we could improve on some of the ideas we got from watching the class at work
- things we learned about a big-city community
- next steps to take in our own community study

TO HELP IMPROVE FUTURE PROGRAMS

Make a few jot notes in the margin of this guide to help you complete the evaluation sheet at the end of the series. Your comments and suggestions are essential to help us improve future programs and guides. You might find it helpful to look at the evaluation form at the end of this booklet before the programs begin.

Program 1
Launching the Study

PURPOSE

The topic for this unit of study was selected by the teacher. Since it did not arise out of pupil interest, it was necessary for the teacher to provide background information appropriate to the age of the children in order to arouse their curiosity and to stimulate them to ask questions. This is the major purpose of the first program.

CONTENT

The program opens with a film in three sections:
– looking at the earth from outer space
– looking at our country from an airplane
– looking at our community from a helicopter

Following the film the teacher asks questions which help the children identify things from the film which revealed the many different services required by a large community:
– banks and business places
– stores and markets
– recreational facilities
– factories
– transportation facilities
– schools
– fire protection
– housing

The teacher limits the study to four of these topics and the children select the four topics they want to explore in the next few weeks.

In an informal way, each child chooses the topic in which he is interested. This establishes working groups. They raise a few questions about each topic.

PREPARATION

1. The children should know they will see a film which will give them a bird's-eye view of Canada and a close look at one big city in their province. Finding it on the map and seeing where it is in relation to their own community will help to orient the study.
2. Discuss the term "community" – people living together in an area and sharing in a number of services or facilities which everyone in that area needs or wants.
3. Have the children list services and facilities available in their own community.
4. Ask a few questions to establish one or two purposes for watching the film. Such questions will vary from class to class.
5. Here are a few examples:
– "As you watch the first part of this program, see if you have visited any of the places you will be seeing. Maybe you have friends or relatives living in other provinces of Canada."
– "Which of the services listed on the chalkboard for our community can you see in the film of the city community?"
– "Which services does the city community have that we we don't need?"

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Expand your list of local community services.
2. Select a few for study.
3. Begin a list of questions children are ready to ask about these services.

Program 2
Planning Together

PURPOSE

To illustrate one way of teacher-pupil planning where the total class is involved:
– organizing the topic to be studied
– discussing ways of gathering information

CONTENT

The teacher works with the total class in developing an outline for the study. The "outline" in this primary class really consists of series of questions the children ask about each of the four topics they selected for study last week. This is the way younger children often begin to develop outlines. Later they tend to move toward topical patterns as illustrated in the Junior Social Studies series. The class then plans activities which could be used to find answers to their questions. Typical of younger children, they think of first-hand experiences before the printed page. This is how young children in particular have learned much of what they know. They plan for an interview with the mayor. They draft a map for a walking trip in the community.

PREPARATION

1. Establish the fact that the program will show the same class seen last week.
2. Expose on the wall or chalkboard the questions your class has asked about its community services.
3. Focussing questions: e.g. "What kind of questions will the class on television ask about their community services?" "Do they have any good ideas for finding answers?" "Can we use any of their ideas?"

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Review the questions on the chalkboard. See if the children want to add other questions.
2. Plan activities and ways of finding answers in harmony with facilities available to your class. In a case where it is out of the question to go out to find information, it may be helpful to bring in resource people.

Program 3
Gathering Information

PURPOSES

– To reinforce basic understandings required to grasp the idea that a map is a diagram of a real place on the earth – the classroom, the school, the school community.
– To practise locating directions on maps and models of familiar places.
– To develop elementary map making and map reading skills – the legend, the title, etc.
– To establish the idea of sketching or recording data on trips to be used in class later.
– To help children develop an awareness of the many different kinds of learnings that can take place on a simple walking trip in the community.

CONTENT

– Sequence for developing map-making and map-reading skills
– Models through diagrams and pupils' simple maps to engineers' maps of the community
– Developing a legend for a map of the community
– Going for a walk in the community to find answers to questions raised during the previous lesson
– Going to the City Hall where many of the services for the community are planned.
– Seeing city halls in many other centres across Ontario:

Peterborough	St. Catharines
Barrie	Sault Ste Marie
Woodstock	Fort William
Windsor	Napanee
Gananoque	Renfrew
Meaford	Pembroke
Kitchener	St. Thomas
Perth	Parry Sound

PREPARATION

1. Tell your class that the children on television are taking a few minutes to review what they have learned about map-making in their community. You might have a clear, simple, commercially prepared map and one or two pupil-made maps visible in the classroom.
2. Ask your pupils to examine the maps in their classroom to see if they include any of the information that the television maps show, i.e.: title, legend, directions, etc.
3. Their maps may show more than the maps on television, i.e.: elevation, scale, etc.
4. Can your children find evidences of community services as they 'go walking' with the children on television and visit the City Hall? How many? What kind?

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Which city hall was closest to your community? How many of your class have seen it? Do they know anyone who worked there? At a level appropriate for your children, discuss map-reading and directions, using the maps in your room. Review any of these skills you think would be useful at this time.
2. What evidences of community services did they see on the walking trip or at the City Hall? Did they notice the mounted police? What do they know about police protection in their community? Continue gathering information about the services in your community.

Program 4
Gathering Information (cont.)

PURPOSES

- To review briefly some of the services discovered so far.
- To show how using a bus makes it possible to look at a community in a different way than using a helicopter or going on a walking trip.
- To gather information to answer questions raised.
- To encourage children to use maps to "see where they are" when they travel.

CONTENT

- Short snatches from last week's walking trip with commentary to review or summarize services observed.
- Bus trip to see the extended community. Narrator points out highlights.
- Map following bus route to utilize some map skills and orient viewers to route.
- A group of three boys visits the fire hall where officials demonstrate the use of some equipment and what happens when an alarm comes in.
- Series of pictures showing different services in cities across Ontario:
  Kapuskasing – recreation
  Oshawa – shopping
  Petrolia, Trenton – libraries
  Elliot Lake, Hawkesbury – health services
  Galt, Hamilton – housing
  Midland, Kapuskasing – education
  Elliot Lake – fire protection
  Smiths Falls – transportation
  Kenora, Niagara River – water power
  Niagara Falls – electricity

PREPARATION

1. A map of Ontario should be visible. Each class might locate its own community with some kind of marker to make it possible to relate its position to other communities pointed out in the program.
2. The list of services available in their own community could be on display.
3. Does this program reveal services they haven't listed?
4. If there are some of these, why aren't they on their list?
5. Can they see any difference in the way a city provides for a need and the way their own community provides for the same need? e.g.: recreation, housing, etc. Why are there these variations?

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Each group should now organize the information and the materials it has gathered to date, and prepare to share it with the class. This stage often takes a number of class sessions. The children might wait to give their reports until they have seen the program next week.

Program 5
Sharing Information

PURPOSE

To have each group share with the total class the information and material it has gathered and organized.

CONTENT

Four group reports:
- recreational facilities in the area
- fire protection
- transportation
- City Hall

PREPARATION

Encourage the children to listen for:
- new ideas – things they didn't know about these four services in general
- specific things they learned about a big city which made it like their community or different from their community
- ways in which the children made their reports interesting
- kinds of materials the children used
- indications that the children shared ideas and cooperated
- indications that some children did more work than others – reasons why this might have happened.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Discussion dealing with the purposes listed before listening. During the next few days, the children can give their class reports if they have reached this point in their own study.

Program 6
Evaluating the Experience

PURPOSE

Through an examination of their own products and performance to help children:
- clarify their understanding of their objectives in the areas of attitudes, skills, understandings;
- modify their objectives in the light of their experience and increasing maturity;
- develop skill in applying constructive critical judgment of their own experience, performance and products.

These evaluative activities are operating from day to day as the children work together. Occasionally at appropriate intervals it is useful to take time to examine the experience in the light of standards and objectives.

CONTENT

The teacher establishes the purpose of the class session – "helpful hints for improving work the next time."
- Skills: Children list a number of rather mechanical ways of improving their reports. These relate mainly to some of the skill areas.
- Attitudes: Values of group work. Values of independent work. Other areas to be explored – ongoing concept of learning.
- Understanding: Getting a few questions from the children which are intended to see if they learned new information about their topic.
- Reviewing major services.
- Playing a "game" to see if children recognize the major services when they examine a series of pictures of services in different cities of Ontario:

  No. 1 Transportation – Sudbury
  No. 2 Recreation – Grand Bend
  No. 3 Government – Ottawa
  No. 4 Health – Wallaceburg
  No. 5 Industry – Terrace Bay
  No. 6 Shopping – Cobourg
  No. 7 Hydro – Mattawa
  No. 8 Education – Trenton
  No. 9 Housing – London
  No. 10 Police protection – any city

The teacher's questions and comments are important to guide the children in this evaluation period. She can direct their attention to aspects of the experience she feels should be strengthened.

At appropriate times, the teacher summarizes. This helps some children to focus and get more from the experience.

The evaluation skills are complex. This primary class will gain much more competence as they continue to work this way. Such participation in evaluation is *one* way of helping children take responsibility for their learning.

They no longer think it is entirely the teacher's responsibility to see how they are getting along with their learning.

Could they think of 'helpful hints' whereby the class on television could have improved their work? Maybe they can think of suggestions the class will forget or has no time to talk about.

PREPARATION

1. Tell the children they will have an opportunity to play a game with the television class at the end of the program. You will give them the paper when they need it. Pass the sheets out when Mrs. Helliwell says to her class, "Now, you have a piece of paper on your desk. I'm going to give each of you a pencil and we're going to try a matching game."
2. The teacher will show a picture of each of the services listed on the sheet below. As she shows picture No. 1, the children are to decide what service is shown and put a '1' under that service on their paper. Then she will show pictures 2, 3, 4 and so on. You can help your class if you put the number of the picture on the board as the teacher shows each picture. They will then put that number in the proper space on their paper.

Prepare a sheet like this for each child:

SERVICES			
1. Industry	4. Transportation	7. Shopping	10. Water
2. Government	5. Protection	8. Health	
3. Hydro	6. Recreation	9. Housing	

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

The children may discuss ways in which they felt the class might have improved its work. They might also talk about their own learning experiences and think of ways of improving. This could be done even in classes where no community study was carried on.

Please fill out this and following page and return to:

EDUCATION TELEVISION BRANCH,
1670 Bayview Ave.,
Toronto 17, Ont.

EVALUATION OF PRIMARY SOCIAL STUDIES SERIES

Grade level_____

I PROGRAMS

Pupil Reaction	With high interest	With some interest	With little interest	With no interest
Anticipated Programs				
Watched Programs				
Discussed Programs				

Pupil interest throughout the series:

was maintained_____ fluctuated_____ increased_____ dwindled_____

The programs seemed to:

_____ stimulate pupil questions

_____ extend pupils' knowledge about a city community

_____ create interest in finding out about their own community

_____ result in more pupil participation in planning

_____ give other ideas for sharing information

_____ stimulate interest in discussing and evaluating

If your class did not study its community during this series, is it interested in working on a topic in this way now?_____

If it did study its community, what elements did it explore?_____

_____

If you happen to recall that any one program was more useful than the others please indicate which one. Do you recall why?

	useful	not very useful		too burdensome	too sketchy
Introductory information			Introductory information		
Purposes for each lesson			Purposes for each lesson		
Contents of each lesson			Contents of each lesson		
Preparation for each lesson			Preparation for each lesson		
Follow-up for each lesson			Follow-up for each lesson		

III Comments and Suggestions: